United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1542
15 December 1993

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council extends UNFICYP mandate until 15 June 1994, noting that present circumstances in Cyprus do not allow for changes in Force's structure and strength; says it will undertake thorough review of situation there, including future role of United Nations.

+ Stressing importance of resolving conflict in Angola, Security Council extends mandate of UNAVEM II until 16 March 1994; decides not to impose additional measures against UNITA at present in view of current direct talks between parties.

+ General Assembly, by 155 votes in favour to 3 against (Iran, Lebanon, Syria), with 1 abstention (Libya), expresses support for Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles and Israel-Jordan Agreement on Common Agenda; urges parties to implement agreements and stress need for rapid progress in Arab-Israeli talks.

+ Secretary-General, at meeting yesterday with Director of ONUSAL Human Rights Division, expresses concern over recent violence in El Salvador and possible impact on electoral process there.

+ Following two-day meeting in Paris, Friends of Haiti declare Governors Island Agreement only viable framework to end Haitian crisis; says if military authorities fail to fulfill obligations under Agreement, Security Council should consider additional sanctions.

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The Security Council today decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) until 15 June 1994. The Council noted that the Secretary-General had recently reported that present circumstances did not allow for any change in UNFICYP's structure and strength and asked him to keep those matters under constant review with a view to the possible further restructuring of the Force.

In unanimously adopting resolution 889 (1993), the Council called on the military authorities on both sides in Cyprus to ensure that no incidents

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occurred along the buffer zone and to fully cooperate with UNFICYP. It once again urged all concerned to commit themselves to reducing the number of foreign troops and defence spending in the Republic of Cyprus to help restore confidence between the parties, and as a first step towards the withdrawal of non-Cypriot forces as set out in the Secretary-General's Set of Ideas for an overall framework agreement. The Council also urged the leaders of both sides to promote tolerance and reconciliation between the two communities.

The Council reaffirmed that the status quo was unacceptable, and encouraged the Secretary-General to pursue his mission of good offices on the basis of the Set of Ideas and the package of confidence-building measures relating to Varosha and Nicosia International Airport. It welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to resume intensive contacts with both sides and with others concerned and to focus on achieving an agreement on the package, to facilitate the process towards an overall settlement. It also welcomed the Turkish Government's declared support for the package, and said it would welcome a statement of support by the Government of Greece. The Council said it would undertake, on the basis of a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General by the end of February, a thorough review of the situation, including the future role of the United Nations, and, if necessary, consider alternative ways to promote implementation of its resolutions on Cyprus.

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Stressing the importance it placed on a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Angola, the Security Council today decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) until 16 March 1994. By unanimously adopting resolution 890 (1993), the Council also decided, in view of the direct negotiations underway between the parties in Lusaka, not to impose at present the additional measures against the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) outlined in resolution 864 (1993). However, it reiterated its readiness to consider at any time steps to impose such additional measures or to review those in effect.

The Council reaffirmed the importance of the role played by the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and UNAVEM II in efforts to reinstate the peace process and the full implementation of the "Accordos de Paz", the agreement under which elections were held in the country last year. The Council called upon both parties to honour the commitments they had already made at the talks in Lusaka and urged them to exercise maximum restraint and stop immediately all military actions, in order to prevent further suffering on the part of the civilian population and further damage to Angola's economy.

The Council requested the Secretary-General to inform it as soon as an effective cease-fire was established, and in any case by 1 Feburary 1994 on progress made in the Lusaka talks. It reiterated its readiness, if significant progress was made in the peace process, to consider promptly any recommendation by the Secretary-General with regard to augmenting UNAVEM II's existing capacity. The Council also welcomed the Secretary-General's actions to implement the emergency humanitarian assistance plan, commended those who had already contributed to relief efforts and strongly appealed for rapid further assistance to meet Angola's growing humanitarian needs.

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The General Assembly has expressed its full support for the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and for the Agreement between Israel and Jordan on the Common Agenda. By a vote yesterday of 155 in favour to 3 against (Iran, Lebanon, Syria) with 1 abstention (Libya), it urged all parties to implement those agreements and stressed the need for rapid progress in Arab-Israeli negotiations. The Assembly urged Member States to provide economic assistance to the Palestinian people during the interim period, and to States in the region. It also welcomed the creation of the high-level United Nations task force to support Palestinian economic and social development.

In another resolution, adopted by a vote of 141 in favour to 1 against (Israel) with 11 abstentions, the Assembly determined that Israel's decision to impose its laws and administration on Jerusalem was illegal and invalid. It deplored the transfer by some States of diplomatic missions to Jerusalem, in violation of Security Council resolution 478 (1980), and once more called on them to abide by the provisions of relevant United Nations resolutions.

In a third resolution, adopted by a vote of 65 in favour to 2 against (Israel, United States) with 83 abstentions, the Assembly emphasized its decision that Israel rescind the illegal imposition of its laws and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan, as well as its 1991 decision annexing the occupied Syrian Golan. The Assembly declared the occupation and de facto annexation of the Syrian Golan a continuing threat to peace and security in the region and once more demanded Israel's withdrawal. It also called on the international community to urge Israel to withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan and from other Arab territories, for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed concern over recent violent incidents in El Salvador and their possible impact on the electoral process there. He discussed those incidents and the human rights situation in the country during a meeting yesterday with Diego García-Sayán, Director of the Human Rights Division of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL). Iqbal Riza, Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations and former Chief of ONUSAL, was also present at the meeting.

The Secretary-General reiterated the need for the consolidation of the achievements of the Peace Accords and noted the efforts of his Special Representative in El Salvador, Augusto Ramirez-Ocampo, according to a United Nations spokesman. He asked Mr. García-Sayán to continue monitoring the human rights situation in the country, and expressed his support for the Joint Group set up last week to investigate illegal armed groups there.

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The process defined by the Governors Island Agreement constitutes the only viable framework for Haiti to emerge from its crisis, according to a Statement of Conclusions issued by the Friends of the Secretary-General on the question of Haiti after a two-day meeting in Paris this week. The group, consisting of Canada, France, the United States and Venezuela, declared that the Agreement offered the only process by which the country could establish a State under the rule of law guaranteeing freedom, security and human rights for all.

During the meeting, the Friends met with Prime Minister Robert Malval, who briefed them on his proposal for a national conference. They concluded that such a conference offered a practical way to address the situation in Haiti. It was the task of the Haitian parties, the Group declared, to work out the procedures and political arrangements required to bring about compliance by both sides with the Governors Island Agreement and the broader objective of national reconciliation.

The Friends said they recognized that the failure of the Security Council sanctions against Haiti was not based solely on the failure of the military authorities to fulfill their commitments. Accordingly, should the Haitian military in good faith take all necessary measures to bring about fulfillment of the Agreement, the sanctions should be suspended regardless of the actions of other parties. If the military failed to comply with their obligations, the Security Council should consider additional measures, including extending the embargo currently applied by the Organization of American States (OAS), applying further sanctions against the main supporters of the military and banning non-commercial flights into and out of Haiti.

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